



PRESS RELEASE
*Office of the United States Attorney
Middle District of Florida*

PAUL I. PEREZ
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY

400 North Tampa Street
Suite 3200
Tampa, Florida 33602
813/274-6000
813/274-6300 (Fax)

300 North Hogan Street
Suite 700
Jacksonville, Florida 32201
904/301-6300
904/301-6310 (Fax)

501 West Church Street
Suite 300
Orlando, Florida 32805
407/648-7500
407/648-7643 (Fax)

2110 First Street
Suite 3-137
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
239/461-2200
239/461-2219 (fax)

Contact: Steve Cole ♦ Public Affairs Specialist ♦ 813/274-6352

For Immediate Release

August 24, 2004

**ARMED CAREER CRIMINAL RECEIVES 15-YEAR MINIMUM MANDATORY
SENTENCE FOR POSSESSION OF 2 HANDGUNS**

ORLANDO, FLORIDA - U.S. District Judge Anne C. Conway today sentenced **DENNIS MICHAEL PICKLE**, 54, of Tennessee, to 15 years' imprisonment for the federal offense of Possession of a Firearm by a Prohibited Person (Convicted Felon). PICKLE previously had entered a guilty plea to the charge on June 3, 2004. In addition to this prison sentence, PICKLE must serve 3 years on supervised release, serve 100 hours of community service and pay a \$100 special assessment. Two handguns and ammunition that had been in PICKLE's possession at the time of his arrest also were forfeited to the United States.

According to the plea agreement, PICKLE was arrested by officers from the Cocoa Beach Police Department for driving under the influence (DUI) on February 1, 2004. A search of the interior of **PICKLE's** vehicle revealed a .45 caliber semi-automatic pistol on the front passenger seat that was loaded with 6 rounds of ammunition. A second semi-automatic pistol, loaded with twelve rounds of ammunition, also was found in the trunk.

The serial number on this firearm had been partially obliterated and it previously had been stolen from Columbia County, Tennessee. As a previously convicted felon, PICKLE is prohibited from possessing either firearms or ammunition under federal law.

The case represents the culmination of a cooperative effort between the United States Attorney's Office, the State Attorney's Office for Brevard/Seminole Counties, the Cocoa Beach Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives ("ATF"). This is another case prosecuted as a part the Department of Justice program "Project Safe Neighborhoods" - a nationwide gun violence reduction initiative with strong support from the ATF. United States Attorney Paul I. Perez is coordinating the cooperative effort here in the Middle District of Florida with federal, state and local law enforcement officials. The objective is to reduce violent crime by locating and seizing unlawfully possessed guns and then swiftly prosecuting the offenders using both federal and state gun laws.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Robert E. Bodnar, Jr. and Special Assistant United States Attorney Gregory Konieczka.